(iv) focus on renewables, decentralized power generation and energy efficiency measures,

(v) multi-lateral funding for collaborative R&D on climate change should be pursued.

(d) As per Kyoto Protocol, the developing countries including India do not have any mitigation commitments. However, the steps taken by India as far as reduction of emissions is concerned are stated in (a) above.

Sale and purchase of captive elephants

2501. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments of Assam and Kerala have approached the Central Government to liberalize the rules relating to sale and purchase of captive elephants and whether similar suggestions have also been received from other quarters;

(b) if so, the nature of proposals received and the action taken thereon by the Central Government; and

(c) if not, the action which has so far been taken and by when the same is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The request of the State Governments to make necessary amendmemts in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, for relaxing the prohibition on sale and purchase of captive elephants is under consideration of the Central Government.

Recycling of sewage

2502. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that for the 27 million litres of sewage generated every day, our capacity is limited for treatment of only 18.6 per cent and of that, only 13.5 per cent is treated before being discharged into lakes, rivers, oceans, etc.;

(b) if so, whether our rivers are dying a slow death and Rs. 5106 crores spent on them under the Ganga Action Plan so far has gone down the drain; and

(c) whether Government would consider re-use and recycling of sewage rather than discharging it into rivers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. According to report

published in 2006 by Central Pollution Control Board, 29000 million liters per day (mld) of sewage is generated from cities and towns in the country. A treatment capacity of around 6200 mld (*i.e.* 21 % approximately) is available in the country out of which 2924 mld capacity has been created under the River Conservation Plans and the balance created by the State Governments out of their own resources. The capacity utilization of the treatment facilities depends upon the operational efficiency achieved by different States through uninterrupted power supply and proper operation and maintenance of the assets.

(b) With the pollution abatement works completed so far in both the phases under Ganga Action Plan which also involved creation of a sewage treatment capacity of 1747 mld., the water quality of the river Ganga has shown improvement at major locations over its pre-GAP quality according to the water quality monitoring done by independent reputed institutions of the country. In respect of river Yamuna, the quality of river water has not shown the desired improvement owing to the large gap between the demand and the availability of sewage treatment capacity particularly in Delhi, and the lack of availability of fresh water for ensuring minimum flow in the river. The works in respect of other rivers are at different stages of completion.

Conservation of rivers is a dynamic activity with the ever increasing pollution load due to increase in population. Review of the strategies of conservation policy and identification of additional towns and rivers is a continuous process. Water being a State subject, it is the responsibility of State Governments to create proper sewerage infrastructure to prevent pollution from entering the rivers. Central Government only supplements the efforts of the State Governments by providing one time grant for capital works for identified polluted stretches. National River Conservation Plan is a major programme of the Government. A total amount of about Rs.2981 crore has been spent till March, 2007 towards pollution abatement works in the rivers of the country, which includes States' share in the projects.

(c) While sanctioning the projects under NRCP, the State Governments and the Implementing Agencies are encouraged to recycle and reuse the treated sewage wherever possible, in order to reduce the fresh water requirements.

Recycling of wastes

2503. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is 10-15 years behind compared to countries like Switzerland and Germany in terms of recycling the wastes;

(b) if so, the reason therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to make use of wastes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India have notified the Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989 as amended in 2000 and 2003 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. These rules regulate the collection, storage, transportation,